

many advanced textbooks and was particularly noted for his clear and accessible lecturing style. Gould could not have wished for a more sober and scientifically scrupulous witness for a sighting at Loch Ness.

But in addition to his scientific credentials, Stewart had interesting literary talents too which immediately appealed to Gould. In his spare time Professor Stewart wrote 'whodunnit'-style detective stories, often using his professional knowledge of chemistry and physics to inform the plot of his mysteries. He was, in his day, very well known by his pseudonym: J.J. Connington.

So Gould and Stewart soon discovered they had much in common. As well as being exceedingly well read, Stewart was a great lover of music and, like Gould, had the best obtainable gramophone and a large collection of records. Not surprisingly, they became good 'pen friends' and for a year or so, from late 1935, they began a regular and wide ranging correspondence. Although they never met (or perhaps because of it) Gould felt able to discuss almost any subject that arose, including the highly sensitive judicial separation, his close friendships, likes and dislikes, and all manner of personal foibles that one could not hope to have found elsewhere, so the letters have proved a valuable source of intimate biographical detail.

It seems Gould himself recognized this and, reminiscent of the personal asides in his Harrison restoration notebooks, it's almost as if he intended the correspondence to be used in this way. At one point he asks Stewart (in jest) whether they might ensure the volumes are left to the British Library. Soon after they began, he started binding up copies of his letters with Stewart's replies, presumably with the intention that they should be preserved and that others may refer to them one day. Early on, as the correspondence was proving so interesting, Gould suggested to Stewart that they might share letters with his friend Alexander Keiller, saying 'He is a man of my own age, and my own type of mind . . .' By December 1936 this correspondence ran to seven slim volumes, but unfortunately volumes one and three are lost<sup>39</sup> and the first few letters, which would be most interesting, have not been seen.

## Abductions

In volume one, in discussing the kind of fiction they enjoy, Gould apparently mentioned deriving sexual gratification from accounts of

abductions, and Stewart then refers to a work entitled *The Man-Stuffers*. In reply to Stewart, Gould notes:

Re abductions. I may have misled you. The only abductions which interest me are those of young women. I take it that mentally, I have a streak of the sadist in me. Not otherwise – I have never been cruel, physically, to any woman in my life (by the way, there has only been one) and I believe myself incapable of so acting. But there is no escaping the fact that, so long as I can remember, I have always been interested, and have taken pleasure in, accounts of girls being kidnapped, gagged, blindfolded, bound hand and foot, handcuffed, lettered and otherwise reduced to a condition of complete helplessness. Also in illustrations and / or photographs of the same

Following this clarification, Stewart is able to recommend another title, Fowler Wright's *Island of Captain Sparrow* which he said he hoped 'fits your needs'. Embarrassment never seems to have been an emotion experienced by Gould; he was happy to discuss his own predilections as a matter of fact, something which was neither right nor wrong but simply there, to be analysed along with everything else – a tendency which goes some way to explaining another extraordinary series of letters he kept among his possessions.

At about this time, or soon after, Gould engaged in correspondence, copies of which were found in an unmarked brown envelope by his son Cecil among Gould's papers, after his death. The contents were copies of type-written letters to Alexander Keiller, along with Keiller's replies, concerning the merits of group sex activities the men engaged in, including one other (identity unknown), with a young woman. The letters, perhaps themselves written partly for gratification, described aspects of the proceedings, which were apparently conducted with ritualistic precision.

The men would meet with the woman at the Café Royal in the afternoon, and would then proceed to an address in South London where the young woman, who had been sent in advance to have a bath (an important part of the ritual apparently), would be waiting for them. They would then take it in turns to have intercourse while the others watched. Cecil was astonished that his father would have kept such letters, describing them as 'absolute dynamite' at the time. The survival of this strange little file of letters is interesting as much for what it says about Gould's view of himself, as it does about his activities at the time. Not knowing what on earth to do with the letters, Cecil and Jocelyne had a quick giggle as they rapidly looked through them and he then



53. *Frites and Chains*. Pen and ink drawing by Gould, c.1910. Although never knowingly cruel to women, Gould had always taken pleasure in accounts and images of girls being 'reduced to a condition of complete helplessness'. (© Sarah Stacey and Simon Stacey, 2005)

promptly tied them to a weight, took them to Westminster Bridge and threw them into the Thames.<sup>28</sup>

During interviews for this biography, three people, two of whom had met Gould, claimed that he was in fact homosexual. On pursuing this question, it seems that the first had simply heard this from a secondary source, and the other two (brothers) stated that their father, who knew Gould professionally, had told them so, but were unable to say on what

evidence he had deduced this. Whether, in the light of the 'group activities' mentioned, one can infer bi-sexuality in all of the men who took part in those rituals (there is some evidence to support that supposition in Keller's case) is highly debatable. Gould certainly had an interest and sympathy with the subject as in later life he was planning to co-author a book on Homosexuality (see the last Chapter). But it must be said that there is no other evidence that this author can find, which supports the suggestion that Rupert Gould was entirely homosexual, and there is considerable proof of his sexual and emotional interest in the opposite sex. It is possible that rumours of his wife's lesbian lover, mixed with his now having returned to live with his mother, might have led to confusion on this score, but after so many years it is impossible to come to a definite conclusion on the matter.

## BBC Broadcasting

With five full scale books to his name, and further writing, in the form of continuing articles and letters to the press, Lt Cdr R.T. Gould was slowly but surely creating a public name for himself. But it was in radio broadcasting that Rupert Gould would first become a truly household name—a 'media star' in modern parlance—during the 1930s.

This aspect of his career in fact began back in June 1927, right in the middle of the action for judicial separation. On 24 June 1927 the BBC Producer Lancelot de G. Sieveking (1896–1972) wrote to the broadcaster A.J. Alan (Pseudonym for L.H. Lambert, 1883–1941) that he was 'glad to have secured your friend Rupert Gould to speak on Big Ben'. The short talk was to be called 'Why Big Ben' and focused on the origin of the great bell's title (it was named after Westminster's Chief Commissioner at the time, Sir Benjamin Hall).

The live talk (all broadcasts were live until the introduction of magnetic recording in the 1930s) went out from Savoy Hill in July, Gould reading from a script he had prepared and which had been edited. Gould evidently enjoyed the experience and offered Sieveking the synopsis for his new book, *Oddities*, to be published the following year. He wondered if Sieveking might find any of the subjects useful for further radio talks by the author. Sieveking could find 'no opening at present . . .', but kept the synopsis on file for a further 3½ years.

It was in January 1934, just as work had begun on writing *The Loch Ness Monster and Others*, that Gould was approached and invited to give